

Message Text

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47

ACTION AF-18

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FM AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3852

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BUJUMBURA 0623

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SCUL, PFOR, BY, US

SUBJECT: TEACHING OF ENGLISH IN BURUNDI

REF BUJUMBURA 256 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: GRB ASKS BRITISH FOR HELP IN ENGLISH TEACHING.
CABLE DESCRIBES PROBLEMS FACED HERE THIS REGARD AND
SUGGESTS PURSUIT OF INTEREST EXPRESSED BY ENGLISH
SPEAKING UNION IN SUPPORTING ENGLISH INSTRUCTION IN BURUNDI.
END SUMMARY

1. BRITISH AMBASSADOR MARK ALLEN, RESIDENT IN KINSHASA AND
ACCREDITED BURUNDI, WAS ASKED BY GRB MINISTER OF EDUCATION
DURING ALLEN'S RECENT VISIT HERE, WHETHER U. K. COULD PROVIDE
PERSONNEL TO SHORE UP ENGLISH TEACHING AT UNIVERSITY OF
BUJUMBURA. ALLEN EXPRESSED PESSIMISM, RECALLING DEPARTURE
BRITISH VOLUNTEERS DURING EARLIER PERIOD, BUT SAID HE
WOULD INFORM LONDON.

2. PRESENT ENGLISH- TEACHING CAPABILITY BURUNDI
EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM SEVERELY AFFECTED BY DEPARTURE
FULBRIGHT PROFESSOR MARY ELLEN MCGOUGH. MATAGEKO
(MURUNID, TEFL- TRAINED AT UCLA) WILL BE CALLED ON TO
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FILL GAP, BUT CAN DO ONLY SO MUCH AND ABSENCE NATIVE
ENGLISH- SPEAKING PERSONNEL WILL BE MAJOR HANDICAP.
BELIEVE MCGOUGH WILL BE DISCUSSING IN FURTHER DETAIL WITH
DEPARTMENT OFFICERS.

3. POST HAS REPORTED TO DEPARTMENT ITS EXCHANGE
OF LATTERS WITH FORMER UNDER SECRETARY GEORGE MCGHEE,
PRESENT CHAIRMAN OF ENGLISH- SPEAKING UNION, CONCERNING
ASSISTANCE IN PROVIDING ENGLISH- TEACHING SUPPORT
IN BURUNDI. WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT' S CALLING THIS
MOST RECENT DEVELOPMENT TO MCGHEE' S ATTENTION IF IT
CONCURS, AND ASCERTAINING PRESENT THINKING OF UNION
CONCERNING BURUNDI PROJECT.

4. CURRENT JUNCTURE IS IMPORTANT ONE. BURUNDI EDUCATIONAL
REORGANIZATION PLAN, AS NOW DRAFTED, UNDERSTOOD TO CALL FOR
DIMINUTION IN AMOUNT OF ENGLISH GIVEN MOST SECONDARY SCHOOL
STUDENTS (CURRENTLY THREE HOURS A WEEK FOR SIX YEARS)
BY ELIMINATING ENGLISH FROM CURRICULUM OF EARLY
SECONDARY YEARS. PLAN STILL SUBJECT MODIFICATION,
AND SOME EDUCATORS ATTEMPTING RESTORE TOTAL TIME
DEVOTED TO ENGLISH. THEIR POSITION WEAKENED BY
DIFFICULTIES BURUNDI CURRENTLY FACES IN FILLING
EXISTING ENGLISH TEACHING POSITIONS WITH QUALIFIED
PERSONNEL. TEACHERS OFTEACHERS THUS ASSUME DOUBLE
IMPORTANCE.

5. EMBASSY RECONGINZES THE PROBLEM, HIGHLIGHTED BY
CURRENT PRESS DEVELOPMENTS, IN PROVIDING HELP IN
BURUNDI. BELIEVE, HOWEVER, DEPARTMENT WILL WISH
CONSIDER IMPORTANT DEGREE TO WHICH SUCH WINDOWS ON
OUTSIDE WORLD CAN CONTRIBUTE TO LONG- TERM EFFORTS
DEAL WITH BURUNDI PROBLEM. PRIVATELY- ARRANGED HELP IN
ENGLISH INSTRUCTION , PERHAPS ARRANGED IN COORDINATION
WITH LONDON IF LATTER INTERESTED, SEEMS WORTH
INVESTIGATING IN THIS CONTEXT.
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